
**HISTORIC PRESERVATION REVIEW BOARD
STAFF REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION**

Property Address:	2112 Wyoming Avenue, NW	X	Agenda
Landmark/District:	Sheridan-Kalorama Historic District		Consent Calendar
		X	Concept Review
Meeting Date:	February 22/March 1, 2018	X	Alteration
H.P.A. Number:	18-210		New Construction
			Demolition

Peter Abiles, representing 2112 PARS LLC, seeks concept review for construction of exterior balconies and an egress stair on the side of a house in the Sheridan Kalorama Historic District.

Property Description

2112 Wyoming Avenue is a three-story brick and stone Romanesque styled townhouse constructed in 1896 as the end unit in a row of six fronting on Connecticut Avenue. The row was designed by Thomas Franklin Schneider, one of the Washington's most noteworthy architects in Washington in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. In addition to being a skillful designer, Schneider was also a highly successful developer; his obituary credited the prolific architect with more than 2,000 residences and 26 apartments and hotels in the city.

Unlike the others in the row facing Connecticut Avenue, the subject property is oriented to Wyoming, with an arched centered front door flanked by a four-story round turret at the corner and a three-story circular bay on the west side. The building sits atop a roughly three-foot high berm. The building to the west is a six-story 1970s era hotel that is non-contributing. A narrow side yard, approximately ten feet in width, separates the subject property from the hotel.

The property has been under renovation over the past year for conversion to a multi-unit residential building, with coordination of those plans with HPO. As part of that renovation, HPO approved replacement of an existing parking pad located in front of the western bay. It appears that the size of the parking pad was somewhat expanded during the course of the replacement. For instance, the landscaped area immediately in front of the western bay and the landscaped berm immediately adjacent to the sidewalk have been eliminated or reduced in size.

Proposal

The proposal calls for construction of a three-story metal and glass balcony structure within the narrow side yard. A circular stair at the rear of the structure would provide access to the three levels and extend up to a roof terrace located behind the existing roof. An existing window at each floor on the west side elevation would be elongated for conversion to a door. The plans show the HPO-approved site plan that includes a larger planting area adjacent to the sidewalk (which in elevation was to recreate the berm and be backed by a retaining wall to

help screen the cars) and a planting area in front of the west bay and the side yard, which would provide screening for the new structure.

Evaluation

The balcony structure would be located within a relatively dark and narrow gap between the two buildings; as an open structure, it would have relatively little heft or visual weight. While the use of glass for the front glass railing was likely intended to make it visually disappear, the reflectivity of glass railings often have the opposite effect. A standard vertical metal picket railing is recommended as a more compatible choice.

The compatibility of the structure would be even further improved if it were pulled back approximately six feet, to the point at which it is shown as canted in footprint. This would require a new door opening being created on the south side of the existing chimney on each level. Creating a new opening on a secondary elevation that is not visible from street view would not raise any preservation concerns.

It is recommended that removal of the excessive paving and recreation of the planting areas should be completed prior to permit approval for the balcony structure.

Recommendation

The HPO recommends that the Board find the balcony structure to be generally compatible with the character of the historic district on the following conditions:

- *The railings be revised to a vertical metal picket;*
- *The front face of the railing be pulled back six feet to reduce its visibility and presence on the street;*
- *The excessive paving should be removed prior to final permit approval.*